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# FINISHING STROKE

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# CALM ADDRESS

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### PEOPLE of ENGLAND.

By the Rev. JAMES MURRAY.

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### FINISHING STROKE, &c.

Should not have taken the smallest notice of Mr Wesley's reveries, provided they had not been calculated to hold forth the best friends of the revolution, and the protestant succession, to government, as objects deserving the royal vengeance. I do not remember to have seen so many falshoods contained in as little bounds, as there are to be found in the Calm Address; for except what he says in the beginning of the pamphlet, namely, that a great number of them were fold, I can scarcely find another well ascertained fact in the whole twenty-three sections. Mr Wesley observes, that he has had opportunity of converfing with persons on both sides of the question, who have been in, and come from America, and by comparing their accounts, has formed an estimate of the true state of the case. Those that are acquainted with Mr Wesley's journals, and know what lengths he frequently goes in stretching facts, will have little confidence in his veracity in telling this story. He proceeds to give us an history ry of the springs and causes of the present unhappy contest between Britain and her late colonies. He is never at a loss for authorities. His Brother Charles

Charles, is always ready—and Charles, good man, bya violent florm was driven into Boston forty-one years ago, and saw the present political storm, and the storm of war gathering fast. He heard several people talking then of independency; but Charles does not fay who they were. Another gentleman two years after this, observed the same thing, and told it to Mr Wesley, and Mr Wesley never told it till the year 1777. Is it very likely, if this had been true, and Mr Wesley had been as sincere a friend to government as he professes himself to be, that he would have kept this rebellious fecret fo long. It is a capital crime to know of treason and conceal it. But the real matter of fact is, that not one of these stories is true, nor would ever have been heard of, provided Mr Wesley had not been employed by some persons to write a pamphlet; and something must be said, Calumniare Aucaster Aliquid Adherebit. It was a thing in justice, due to the public, to have given the words and names of the men, that were then hatching rebellion.

Mr Wesley informs us that he has abundance of letters, from persons in America, whose judgment and veracity and impartiality he can fafely depend The public would have defired to see these letters, and had a right to see them; seeing they fix charges upon their fellow-subjects of a very heinous nature. I can assure Mr Wesley that I have no letters from that country, but I heard Dr Ewing and Dr Williamson, two gentlemen from Philadelphia, affirm fince this controversy began, that the Americans had no such ideas as independency. These gentlemen were examined in the cabinet council, and Mr Wesley's friends can tell him whether they did not declare the same thing there, and also gave reasons why they thought independency not convenient. The notions of independency were produced by the

the violence of the measures of government. Our author in his historical narrative, imputes the encrease of population in America to the mildness of government,-and this is a reason why it should have continued mild, for the more subjects a government has, the richer it grows.—But the mischief of the matter is, when they turned rich they defrauded the king of his customs. Like Scotch and English fmugglers they run goods, when it was in their power, and the officers could not find them out. And worse fill, the celebrated Mr Hancock was the most notorious of the whole gang. Now to shew how far Mr Wesley's word isto be depended upon, I heard a Mr Turner a supercargo of a vessel in the harbour of Newcastle, declare in the presence of some gentle. men in this town, who will be ready to bear testimony to what I affirm.—that what Mr Wesley says of Mr Hancock, was a malicious flander. And moreover I must inform Mr Wesley, that though Mr Turner is as inveterate an enemy to the Americans as he is, yet the flander which he read in his Calm Address, made him both swear and curse most terribly. When a grave religious man, has so far got the better of his conscience as deliberately to publish notorious falsehoods to the public, what credit can be given to him in any thing he fays? What Mr Wesley fays concerning the American Juries is exceedingly malicious, and shews that this old man has given up all regard to truth and decency. What reasons has he to conclude that the Juries in America are guilty of perju-. ry more than Juries in England? If they acquitted the persons who were accused of smuggling, it was because there was no guilt, and because the officers stretched their commissions, as they are cf.en found to do in Old England, as well as in New England. Before Mr Welley had ushered such a grievous accusation against any people, he ought to have shewn A 4 that that the evidence was directly contrary to the verdict of the jury. But this he has not done, and therefore the whole must be considered as a deliberate malicious slandering of an innocent people.—
Had Mr Wesley had proofs at hand to have confirmed his accusations, there are none who know the character of the man, but must be persuaded, that he would have given them at sull length. He is neither so unwilling to write, nor does he want a disposition to set this subject in the clearest light. The reason why he proceeds no farther than he has done is, that there is not one word true that he says.

What this writer fays against the patriots in England, is what now he must confess to be a wicked slander; for his good friends the ministry have said the same things that the patriots have faid; and the Americans have not been rebels, other wise the new acts of parliament are acts of hypocrify. Mr Welley fays, as it was thought reasonable every part of the British Empire should furnish its part of the general expence, the English parliament laid a small duty on the tea imported to America; and then the patriots and Americans confidently afferted that the English parliament had no right to tax America. This he calls afferting a new right. But it is certainly a right as old as the Constitution of England, that all countries that are taxed by any government ought to have some share in the legislature; but the Americans had none in England, and could not lawfully be taxed by the English parliament. The English tea, was thrown into the fea, which Mr Wesley calls an ast of rebellion. But he does not prove this point. For it can be no act of rebellion to refilt laws that are contrary to the essential constitution of an empire. It was as much contrary to the laws of the British Empire, for people to bring tea to America with a new tax upon it, as for them to throw it into the fea. If the British parliament has a right to tax the American

rican tea, without their consent, they have right to tax their heads, and every thing they have also But the truth is, they have no right to tax themat all, more than they have a right to tax countries that have no representatives in their legistature. America by fituation is fo far diffant from-England, that it is not possible, that the people there can be repreiented in the parliament of Great Britain, and it is both illegal and unjust to entrust a people that squander away their own substance, upon the most unworthy objects, with the most interesting concerns of others, when there is no restraint upon them. Mr Wesley brings a charge against some principal people in this country of writing letters to the Congress nearly in these words,-" make no concessions; give " up nothing. Stand your ground. Be resolute; " and you may depend upon it, in less than an year " and an half, there will be such commotions in " England, that the government will be glad to be " reconciled to you, upon your own terms." This is like many others of Mr Wesley's groundless affertions; founded in suspicion and published out of malice. He ought to have given the very words of the letters, and have informed us who were the authors; but he could not, otherwise he would have done it. It is amazing he is not ashamed to publish such glaring falsehoods. Does he imagine that people are obliged to take his word for things that affect the characters of an innocent and inoffensive people abroad and persons at home, who have never offended? He has too often forseited his character as a story-teller, to deserve credit in matters of such importance.

But let us now come to his account of the general fast, and the efficacy thereof,—" At length says he the king proclaimed a fast in England that we might humble ourselves before God, and implore

es his bleffing and affiliance; some of the patrons of " independency mocked at this, and endeavoured to " turn it into ridicule." It was no more than it de-" ferved, which Mr Wesley knows very well; for it was a folenn mocking of the most high, and the most daring impiety that ever a nation expressed against the great supreme of the universe. Yet he has the assurance to fay,-" that there is all reason to si believe that God was well pleased with it." Mr Wesley was certainly dreaming when he wrote what follows; for all that he fays, happened in confequence of the fast, had happened before it. Long-Island, Staten-Island, New-York, Fort Washington and Fort Lee were all in possession of the King's troops before Mr Wesley and his friends humbled But I must now tell Mr Wesley that there are some consequences of this mock fall, which he has forgotten to mention, there was something happened at Trenton in the Jerseys, which fell out near about the time of that by pocritical humiliation: 500 men lost their lives, and the British forces were defeated with difgrace, by very inferior numbers. The almighty feems to have been in wrath at such diffimulation, and shewed a very early mark of his displeasure. The prayers of the fasters was for blood and it was not long till the Lord gave them blood to drink. Another effect of this profane humiliation is, that it hardened the hearts of finners and made them repeat the fame disobedience. There is another thing that has followed this new method of fasting, a whole British army has been delivered into the hands of the colonies, and another shut up in Philade'phia, likely to be in the same situation.

This arch-hypocrite, wilfully utters the court language, which both ke and they knew to be absolutely false. Hear his own words, what would a million do if they ran away as soon as the English appeared, whatever

whatever they do they will not fight. I believe they cannot for the hand of God is upon them. Was there ever greater falsehoods and profanity? The old man either knew he was telling a lie or he was willing to be deceived. For there is not a word of truth in all that he has faid upon this subject. The first lord of the treasury has proved in the House of Commons to a demonstration, that in all the battles which have either been lost or gained on both sides, that the British forces have been superior in numbers to the provincials. Mr Wesley ought to rebuke Lord North for deceiving him; and making him expose himself to the world as one of the most notorious, perverters of facts that ever existed, but qui vult decipi, decipiatur. The old man had good will to the employment, and was willing to be deceived. But suppose that MrWesley might be forgiven for becoming a dupe to the ministry, yet who can forgive him for abusing the name and charafter of the almighty? He tells lies of his God wilfully and wittingly; fince we fought help from God, there has been a manifest blost upon them. All the blasts that has yet appeared has been in their favour, and aguinflMr Wesley's de r iends the ministry, and the cause of blood they have espoused. I would ask Mr Wesley how he could be fo daring as to ask God to help to dellroy his own people; for no other reason than to gratify the wantonness of a few ambitious men, that have not the fear of God before their eyes?

But we now come to another piece of history which is to be found no where, but in Mr Wesley's private chronicle which he now and then receives from some profligate persons who were methodist preachers in America, and set a drift for male practices, and joined the British army. If this accuser of the Americans shall charge me with misrepresenting him, and some othis friends, I shall find him among his own friends, vouchers for what I assirm. He represents the Americans as cruel, barbarous, and savage, burning houses and sending

women and children into the woods. Did he not receive this intelligence from a certain quarter, from one who knew nothing of the matter, because the author was obliged to make the best of his way to New-York to fave his head. He fled fo fast that he thought all things were on fire behind him. The Gazette is gospel, when compared to the Calm Ad. dress. It is surprizing that Lord and General Howe, Burgoyne, and others, who were upon the spot never told us of this barbarity. It has not as yet been registered in the Gazette, nor published in the most venal chronicles. This confumate piece of falsehood was left for the pious repository, Mr Wesley's Calm Address I wonder how this dissipated old man can shew his face for shame. He feems to be past all feeling. But if my audience will bear with me a little, I will give them a specimen from his own words of the strangest rant that ever proceeded from the pen of an Enthusiast, -" At first prosperity seemed to at-" tend them in all their undertakings. But fince " we fought help of God, there has been a manifest " blast upon them. Their armies are scattered; their " forts and strong holdslost; their provinces taken one after another. Mean time they are not humbled? " No: they roar like a wild bull in a net. They tear up the ground with fierceness and rage; repentence is hid from their eyes. They revenge " themselves upon women and children. They burn all behind them! O American virtue! are these " the men who are proposed as a pattern to all Eu-" rope"? This is more like the ravings of a bedlamite than a grave aged divine; but what renders the whole confumately wicked, it is all lies, and not one word of truth in it all. The meaning and defign of it is to dress up the Americans in the worst attiudes possible to make them hateful to their fellow subjects of Great Britain, that they may join in affifting assisting the government to destroy them. This writer proceeds to enforce his exclamation upon the minds of his countrymen. What are the reflections that naturally arise in your breaks? Are you not ready all to rise and hasten across the Atlantic to destroy such miscreants? That is the design of this violent exclamation. Mr Wesley affirms,-" there is not the least shadow of liberty left in the " confederate colonies. There is no liberty of the " press. A man may more fafely print against the " church in Italy and Spain than publish a tittle a-" gainst the congress in New-England or Pennsylva-There is no liberty of conscience. What minister is permitted to follow his own conscience " in the execution of his office. To put men in mind to be subject to the principalities and powers? "To fear God and honour the king? who is fuf-" fered (whatever his conscience may dictate) to " pray for the king and all in authority." How can Mr Wesley expect the Americans will grant what our own government will not allow at home? Is it not wisdom to restrain professed enemies? would the King of Great Britain, or would any loyal subjects in England suffer men openly to pray for the pretender or write indefence of his rights; or, would they not secure all spies that were either fent by their enemies, or were residing among themselves, watching to deltroy their rights or liberties. The Americans have declared they have no king, and confider themselves no more fubject to our king than the Dutch reckon themselves subject to the King of Spain, and therefore confider those as rebels against their states who want to subject them to a foreign authority. Were any endeavouring to prove that the Americans have dominion in England, or had aright to rule here they would deserve to be served in the same manner. I do not find that the Americans meddle with any perfons good or bad, except those of their enemies, and our army does the same thing. Mr Wesley ought first to have settled which cause is the most righteous, before he had been so violent in his censure. He says if any man says a word for the king what will follow? I answer, any man may say he is King of Great Britain and Ireland in any place of America, and no bad thing will follow. And no person here dare say that the Congress are lords of Great Britain, without having reason to expect as bad consequences, as those he supposes in America. The Jacobites in the reign of King William made use of the same arguments against the revolution.

This sympathizing Christian divine is very much concerned for the poor colonies, because they have given up, the substance for the shadow. But the people themselves do not complain; it is only a few tories in the colonies that are defirous of making the rest slaves, that complain, because they cannot have power to enflave them. Mr Wesley assirms, - that we " have received no liberty from our fathers; that " English liberty only commenced at the revo-" lution." Well let us hold there; then, we had it from our forefathers, for there are few alive now that ever faw the revolution. But we are also obliged to those who struggled before that time for obtaining liberty, though they did not facceed fo per-I find Mr Wesley's hand begins to shake, when he mentions Oliver Cromwell and the long parliament; Croinwell was no friend to fuch as Mr Wefley, nor would he have rewarded him for his Calm Address. It was in his time and that of the long parleament that English nen began to claim liberty more perfectly. It is true what Borel the Dutch Ambassador said of him, Gromwell etoit un grand homme. Gromwell was a great man. But would the government of Britain have permitted the friends of King lames

James to have written in his defence, or prayed for him publicly more than the Congress will suffer the friends of our sovereign to pursue these measures. I suppose not, yet Mr Wesley consesses this was the

of liberty.

This author comes at last to view this subject in a religious light, and endeavours from scripture to urge obedience to the higher powers; he also exhorts men to abstain from speaking evil of the rulers of our people. This is all right. But I suppose there is a difference between speaking things that are true, and things that are evil. If acts of oppression are visible, and government continues to oppress, is it speaking evil to say that oppression is contrary to law and righteousness? We are a people governed by laws, and it is not speaking evil of rulers to say that they err when they transgress the laws of the land, by exertions of power contrary thereto. Mr Wesley's argument for the powers that be, is just as strong in favour of the American Congress as it is in favour of the government of Great Britain; for whenever a government is changed, and another comes in its stead, the latter is the power that then is, and according to Mr Wesley, ought to be obeyed for conscience-sake. But it is plain that the apostle means no passive obedience nor non resistance, but only declares the duty of subjects to those powers that are a terror to evil and a praise to what is good. Trisling upon this subject is altogether needless; for no man is in conscience bound to obey those, who do not rule according to the laws of lociety. Just government and allegience are reciprocal. The righteous God of heaven could never command his rational. creatures to obey either the devil, or his servants that ferve him. No government except that which tends to the good of the whole community as its end, can be from him who loves all his creatures, any other

ways that national evils and calamities are sent to nastions for punishment of their transgressions. And it would be no compliment to a magistrate to tell him he was of God in the same way, that Nimrod, Nero, and Judas Iscariot, was of God. Magistracy is from God, and is his ordinance, but those who prostitute that office by dissipation, luxury, extravagance, and oppression are from another quarter. It appears preposterous and contrary to reason, and common fense, that so many millions of people should be obliged to answer all the demands which the lusts of rulers make 'upon them; and that half should be enslaved and starved to find fewel to nourish the flame of a passion for dominion, which in the end ruins both the foul and body of the magistrate. The money laid out upon pageantry of courts and for supporting an extravagant royal equipage, and grandeur, is the worst applied of any fort of human substance. When all the subjects live easy, let the dignity of superiors be in proportion, but governors ought always to consider the situation of their subjects. I cannot perceive that there is any principle in scripture or reason, that say that millions should be wasted by a few, when hundreds of thousands are pining away in want, hard labour; and poverty. There is enough in the world to make all honest people live comfortably, provided suitable dividends were observed. There is no occasion to pursue leveling practices, to obtain this end; for moderation in the great would keep the poor from distress without raising them equal to the high, or bringing them below their dignity.

I am far from wishing either the dignity of magistrates, or the honour of government lessened in any
degree; but I cannot help thinking that the honour
and dignity of both might be supported with far less
expence to the community; and with more advan-

government does not confist in the sums of money that are expended by royal servants, nor in the pageantry and shew that is made by a multitude of attendants, but in the right exercise of power, for the end and purpose for which it was at first substituted. Real dignity is not what every one thinks so,—there is a standard of dignity, which is to do what is worthy in itself and prositable to society at large. This is the dignity of government, and of a crown. The farther men depart from this, they will have the less dignity. There need be no difference among mankind about this point; they might all agree in the principle, though they differ in the way of

feeking to obtain the end.

There is one thing which Mr Welley takes for granted, throughout his whole Calm Address, "that there are numbers of people that speak evil of dignities, and of the higher powers."-This does not appear from any thing he has faid; he affirms but does not prove his point. Those whom he calls patriots in derision, have as much reverence, and regard for their King and the laws of their country as he can pretend to have; but they are not so destitute of regard to truth as to call good evil and evil good, put light for darkness, and darkness for light .-At the same time that they venerate government, they reprobate the actions of men who pervert it to the ruin of the laws and the constitution. To speak evil of governors is to lie upon them, or misrepre-Sent their actions, to say they do what they do not. But who are those patriots who have abused the king, or have told falsehoods of his fervants? Their actions are public, and free to any one to censure or approve, as they appear right or wrong. Such as have either abused the King, or lied upon his ministers deserve a severe censure and rebuke; but who are these?

these? Mr Wesley has not told us, except in general. I deny the fact, and call upon Mr Wesley to prove what he has afferted. It has been often proved that the present executive powers, and the present legislature also, have done several things contrary to the fundamental laws of the British fociety; and made modern statutes clash with ancient constitutions; but this is not speaking evil of dignities, but speaking truth of them. Does Mr Welley really believe that the Apostles Paul and Peter in. tended by their exhortations to the ancient Chriflians, to enjoin it as duty to them to yield obedience for conscience sake to Nero, to help him to burn Rome? Or would they have been guilty of a transgression of apostolical authority if they had said that it was a very wicked action in the emperor to do it? Or would it not have been their duty to have resisted such an act of violence and tyranny? This to be fure, according to Mr Wesley, would have been resisting the powers that be, and bringing damnation upon the heads of those that resisted. But is it posfible that a righteous God would ever require reafonable creatures to support any authority for their own destruction? It is amazing that it should have been the privilege of mankind from the beginning of the world till the coming of Christ, to judge concerning the actions of men in power, and to censure them as they deferved, and that this liberty should have been taken away by Christ, who in all other respects enlarged the privileges of mankind.

But the apostle in his commands to the Christians, has no respect to wicked magistrates at all. He calls them Exerias unespectaries. The excellent authorities. Our translators know well enough how to render unespectaries in other places, as Phil ii. 3. Let every man, namely, every Christian, esteem another more excellent than himself, unespectares.

Phil.

Phil. iii. 8.-this word is made to express the excellency of the knowledge of Christ, To UTEPEXON. the fourth chapter this word is applied to the peace of God which excelleth all things, vwefex2000 whole meaning of the apostle is in short, in his own words, expressed thus, let every soul be subject to the powers that protect them; for it is not authority unless it come from God. . The authorities that be of God, are commanded by him. Thus they have their mark and criterion by which they are known to be from God; they bave his appointment, and it is their end to answer that appointment. When they do not answer that end, the ordinance is perverted by the mifmanagement of the offirer, and therefore, though the ordinance deserves our regard, the magistrate that perverts it deserves our disapprobation. This is plain and sair reasoning. It is indeed very wicked and absurd to make the holy scriptures support doctrines to which they were never intended to give the smallest aid. In the times of the Apostles Peter and Paul, there were some who assumed the Christian name; who imagined by becoming Christians that they were freed from all obedience to lawful authority, and like those people at Munster, in the beginning of the reformation wanted to lével all ranks and distinctions. Lest this should be imputed to all the Christians, and be made an handle against them, the apostles commands the churches to be subject to all degrees of lawful authority; whether they were fupreme or subordinate. And this is the whole of their design and intention, in all these exhortations. They did not mean to inculcate non-resissance of tyranny, but only pointed forth men's duty to magistrates that were a terror to evil doers, and a praise to them that did well.

Mr Wesley has a particular antipathy against those

those he calls Disenters from the church. He threatens them with the vengeance of church and But what have they done to deserve the royal displeasure? their fathers were zealous in bringing the Brunswick family to the throne of Bri. tain, when Mr Wesley's good friends did all in their power to oppose the accession. They, with all their influence, opposed two rebellions, when a Popish Pretender, with his adherents, attacked fovereign upon the throne. And they now endeavour to support the same principles, they did then, against men who are maintaining the same principles that those rebels did. They are exceedingly forry to see men giving counsels to their sovereign that are calculated to make him drive from him a very considerable part of his dominions. Had their withes succeeded, much blood and treasure had been preserved, and neither resistance, nor attempts to resist, had been heard of .- The people in America have been of much service to this country; and though their fathers were driven from it by the Lauds and Sheldons, Mr Wesley's good friends, yet they have long maintained a very great regard for their mother country; and had, she not turned a cruel stepmother, they would not have thrown off her yoke. This accuser of the brethren charges the Dissenters with speaking reproachfully of their governors; but points out not one fact. He threatens them with the vengeance of both God and the King, and all for nothing. They have faid nothing, they have done nothing, that even he himself can fix upon them to deserve the vengeance of either. wicked reprobate old man if he had the almighty's bolts to shoot, he would soon send all the dissenters to hell. But how does he know that the almighty will laugh at their calamities and mock when their fear someth. The Almighty is merciful, and will not liften to the

would not wish even this old hardened sinner such a fate, as he threatens the dissenters with. Let him find mercy, and grace in time of need; and truly if ever he obtain mercy, he will find that it will not be for writing this Calm Address. I wonder much how he could give it this title, when it breathes nothing but falsehood and vengeance. If this is a Calm Address few can tell what is a violent one.

This performance of Mr Wesley is an hint to government, when they have leisure to persecute the Protestant Dissenters. This old man cannot die in peace without having a little blood shed before he die upon the eld score. But should even his Sheldens, and Lauds arise and also a prince willing to support their sanguinary measures, there will still be tound among Dissenters such as will overcome by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony, and

give even their lives for so good a cause '

From what Mr Wesley has said, he either knows, that some of his brethren 'are very wicked, or wishes. that they may be so, when he fays that they are only waiting for an opportunity to persecute innocent people on account of their religion. But if Mr Wesley, and his friends shall ever again try this experiment, let them take care, that the blood of Disfenters does not drown their hierarchy, and in conclusion put a period to those dignities that are so ready to oppress mankind. It once happend that the violent measures of a Laud, ruined both himself and his fovereign, and overset the whole fabricof episcopacy. Perhaps if such measures are again pursued, the next blow will be a total annihilation of the whole fystem; for mankind will not always. endure an order of men that cannot enjoy their dominion and power without having it drenched in blood.

This hint which Mr Wesley has thrown out can be of no service to government, but a real injury; for if any believe what he has assirmed, they will find it-their interest, to sly to an asylum which providence seems to have prepared for them. It was the persecution of men of the principles of Dissenters, that laid the foundation of the American Empire, and probably the pursuit of Lauds principles may now do much to establish its independency. I heartily wish that our present sovereign may be preserved from men of Mc Wesley's principles, who are ready to advise measures, that will always embarass government, as long as men have the smallest sense of their own liberties.

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